

OUR TOWN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

SEPTEMBER 2011



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LOS ALTOS LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS

Year founded

1914

Number of books
in 1914

50

Number of books
in 2011

290,000

Year library was built

1964

Monthly salary of
first librarian

\$5

State funding for
library system

\$0



Turning the Page

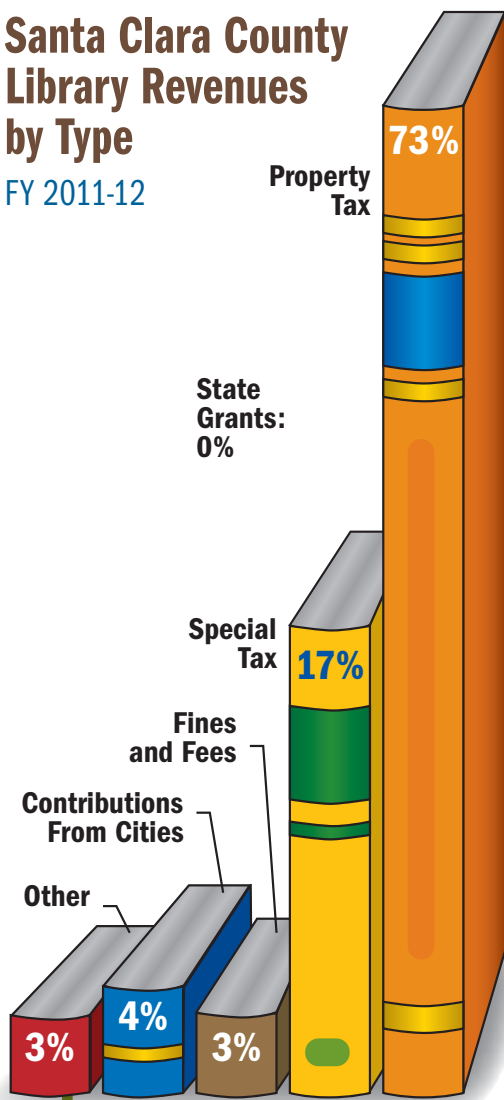
The Los Altos/Los Altos Hills library is part of a system that consistently ranks among the best in the country. But a number of factors have come together to spur the City Councils of Los Altos and Los Altos Hills into looking at alternatives to the current system. A new fee imposed on non-resident patrons that went into effect on July 1, 2011, coupled with a growing mismatch between the communities' comparatively large financial contribution to the system and resulting allocation, have prompted the re-evaluation. As a result, the two City Councils have begun exploring all the options available to them, including establishing their own library independent of the Santa Clara County Library Joint Powers Authority (SCCLJPA). [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2.]

Current structure and oversight

The JPA includes nine cities in all: Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, LA/LAH, Milpitas, Morgan Hill, Saratoga/Monte Sereno. Meanwhile, six other cities in the county run their own libraries: Los Gatos, Mountain View, Palo Alto, San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale. Each JPA member community has a representative on the governing board, which also includes two county supervi-

Santa Clara County Library Revenues by Type

FY 2011-12



sors, giving each city one vote out of eleven. In theory, communities in the JPA gain administrative efficiencies and cost savings by pooling resources, in exchange for surrendering some autonomy and control.

Disbursements out of line with contribution

The formula for allocating resources among the nine JPA cities stands on

The formula for allocating resources among the nine JPA cities stands on three legs—population size, circulation volumes, and assessed property values.

three legs—population size, circulation volumes, and assessed property values. Because the first two are related (the bigger the city, the greater the circulation, other things equal), the formula essentially doubles down on size, which works against the smaller communities in the JPA, such as Los Altos and Los Altos Hills. Using this formula and an allowance for the “platform” or physical library space, the JPA then apportions staff and books among its various branches. The issue of physical space is important because every library in the system has been remodeled or rebuilt since 1990 except Los Altos.

In terms of contributions, the LA/LAH portion rests heavily on property taxes, in addition to a special parcel tax and the cities’ contribution. Add it all up, and the LA/LAH share stands at 22% of JPA revenues but just 17% of resources received. In dollar terms, this works out to a shortfall of approximately \$1.4 million a year. For comparison’s sake, consider that the parcel tax LA/LAH voters approved in 2010 to supplement the library budget brings in about \$1 million per year.

Fees, sustainability also issues

On July 1, 2011, the library began charging non-JPA city residents an \$80 annual fee for library usage. Not only is this out of line with an established history of free

library access for all, but it hurts specific groups of users, including non-JPA resident students of Foothill College and volunteers at the Los Altos library itself, a great many of whom are now subject to the new fee.

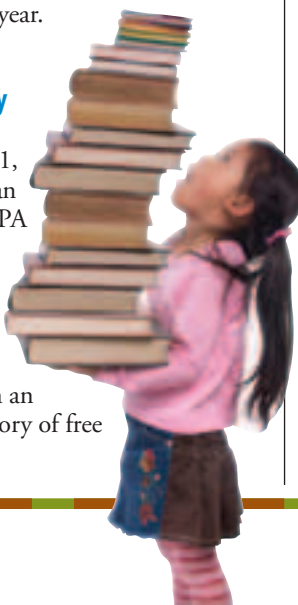
In addition, the system-wide savings are less significant than they perhaps could be because of fairly sizable administrative costs. In addition, library workers are employed by the county, whose contracts typically have more rigid wage and benefit structures than do those of Los Altos Hills Town employees, for example. Indeed, rapid labor and benefit cost escalation in the past forced a reduction in library hours. It was this reduction in hours and services that the recent Los Altos and Los Altos Hills parcel tax was meant to address. What’s more, it seems certain that barring some sort of change, future cost escalation will inexorably lead to difficult choices between additional taxation or service cuts.

Feasibility studies underway

To address these issues, the LA/LAH City Councils recently voted to pursue legal and financial feasibility studies around separation from the JPA. One solution is to form a standalone LA/LAH library, as Palo Alto and other neighboring communities have done.

In such an arrangement, the library would cooperate with other city libraries to gain access to a broader collection of books and services. Another potential solution is to use the feasibility studies as leverage in negotiations with the JPA to address the shortcomings in the current arrangement.

The feasibility studies are ongoing, with updates to be provided at future Council meetings. Whether the solution is a separate, city library or a renegotiation of the arrangement with the current JPA, the ultimate goal of the exercise is to provide the highest quality service to the community consistent with the long-term financial health of the library, in a governance and oversight framework that provides a greater degree of control to the cities. Hills residents can certainly expect to hear more about this important topic going forward.



TO LEARN MORE:

Visit the Town’s website at www.losaltoshills.ca.gov/city-government/council/reports

Town Addresses Pathway and Safety Issues

Arastradero Trail Safety Improvement Project

The Town has an opportunity to improve the safety of its pathway system along Arastradero Road and Page Mill Road. As part of an agreement between Stanford University and the County of Santa Clara, Stanford is required to offer to fund improvements to an existing trail within the Town, identified as the C-2 trail in the County's Trails Master Plan. The proposed project will allow residents in the northwestern part of Town to safely walk and ride to and from Arastradero Preserve. The project begins on Arastradero Road at Purissima Road and travels west to Page Mill Road, then south to Arastradero/Baleri Ranch Road and finally to the Arastradero Preserve in Palo Alto. The improvements consist of rehabilitating existing pathways, installing new bike lanes, improving a crosswalk, and completing a missing pathway section on Arastradero Road adjacent to I-280. Currently, there is a section of Arastradero Road where users are required to walk on the shoulder of the roadway because there is no room for a pathway.

On May 23, 2011, a joint Pathways and Open Space Committee meeting was held at Town Hall to discuss the proposed project and get input from

residents. At the meeting, the public expressed concerns about traffic and parking, crime, and graffiti on a proposed retaining wall.

To address these concerns, the Town's traffic consultant has been authorized to conduct a new survey to help determine if there will be a significant increase in users from out of the area now that the Stanford S-1 trail is open. To minimize potential graffiti problems, the Town will investigate the use of retaining wall that will allow vegetation to be grown on the wall's face. The Town, Stanford, and consultants will work on a revised set of plans incorporating public and committee comments and present to the City Council for review. The tentative schedule is to complete bid documents in October 2011 and award a construction contract in January 2012.

Fremont Road Bicycle Path Project

In order to provide a safe and healthier way for children to commute to local schools and reduce vehicle traffic and emissions, the Town applied for a Vehicle Emissions Reductions Based at Schools (VERBS) grant from the Valley Transportation Authority. We are proud to report that in January 2011, the Town received approval for an \$800,000 grant to design and construct a

dedicated bicycle route along Fremont Road.

Initially, the plan was to provide on-road bicycle lanes in both directions for the entire length of Fremont Road from West Edith Avenue to Arastradero Road. However, Town residents objected to widening Fremont Road to accommodate bicycle lanes. The project design was then revised to a single separate, paved bike path adjacent to Fremont Road running from West Edith Avenue to Town Hall. Further, the project could extend from Town Hall to Pinewood School depending on budget constraints.

A joint meeting of the Pathways and ad hoc Traffic Safety Committee was held on June 29, 2011 to discuss the revised project design and to solicit further input from the public. Some members of the public acknowledged the need to improve the pathway conditions along Fremont Road but thought the proposed bike path was too wide, might not necessarily be any safer than the existing path, and would negatively impact the appearance of the streetscape. As a result, Town staff is back to the drawing board and will work with design consultants on a third preliminary design that incorporates the latest round of resident comments.

Carl Cahill, City Manager

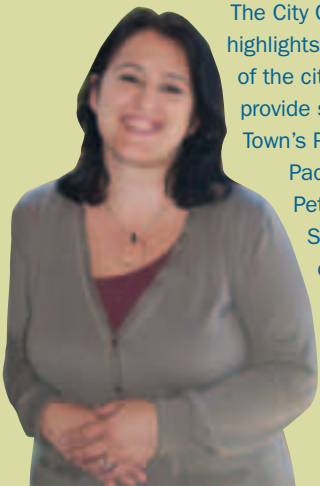
New City Clerk Appointed

One of the most visible positions in our town staff has a new face. Deborah Padovan, a Bay Area native, became the City Clerk on July 11, taking the duties of Karen Jost, who retired after many years of service.

The City Clerk has numerous responsibilities. Padovan says one of the highlights of the job is interacting with Town residents and being part of the city government. Padovan will coordinate town volunteers and provide support for committees and events. She also serves as the Town's Public Information Officer.

Padovan spent the last six years as the Deputy City Clerk of Petaluma. Prior to that, she was legal secretary for the City of San Bruno and worked in private legal practice. Padovan has a daughter currently attending college. Her husband works for Sonoma County. The couple plans to relocate to the Peninsula.

Among Padovan's passions are lighthouses. She and her husband gave their wedding vows in one in Mendocino and have so far visited about 85 lighthouses.



JOST RETIRES

A heartfelt goodbye was given to retired City Clerk Karen Jost with a Hawaii-themed potluck at Westwind

Community Barn in July. Over 60 people attended, thanking Jost for her dedicated service. Jost served as City Clerk from 2002 to May 2011. She first joined the town staff in 1990 as assistant to the City Engineer and City Manager. She also served as Fire Commissioner for Los Altos Hills County Fire District for ten years. Jost was recognized for her dedication, efficiency, and especially her warmth and humility.





Santa Clara Valley Water District's Water-Use Survey and Landscape-Conversion Rebate Program

If you are looking for ways to save water, money, and energy, Santa Clara Valley Water District can help through its Water-Wise House Call and Landscape Conversion Rebate Program. Under the program, residents can receive up to a \$2,000 rebate by replacing high-water-using plants such as turf grass, with low-water-using plants from an approved plant list.

The Water-Wise House Call program is a free home water-use survey that helps identify opportunities for water conservation. Conducting a house call involves calculating water use, teaching homeowners how to read the water meter, surveying the irrigation system, and sharing simple ways to save water both inside and outside the home. Water-Wise House Calls are available Monday through Saturday. To schedule an appointment, please call the District at 1-800-548-1882.

In addition to the water-use survey, the District also offers rebate programs for landscape conversion. Homeowners replacing high-water-use landscapes, such as lawn, with low-water-use plants may qualify for rebates in the amount of \$0.75 per square foot up to \$2,000. Requirements for the landscape replacement rebate include:

- A minimum of 100 square feet of qualifying high-water-using landscape must be converted in order to participate in the landscape conversion rebate.
- Fifty percent of plant coverage in converted area must be listed on the SCVWD Qualifying Plant List.
- All planting areas must have a minimum of two inches of qualifying mulch, including chipped or shredded bark, rock, gravel, or weed-free straw.
- Irrigation systems, if used within the converted area, must be low-volume drip, micro-spray, or bubbler.
- There can be no net increase in the size of the irrigated area.
- The sprinkler system for the remaining lawn must be modified to provide adequate coverage and may not spray onto the converted landscape area.

For more information on the program and a complete list of requirements, see the Santa Clara Valley Water District website at: valleywater.org/Programs/LandscapeReplacementRebates.aspx

Debbie Pedro, Planning Director

TOWN FINANCES REMAIN HEALTHY

The Town's 2011-12 fiscal condition remains healthy, with operating revenues and expenditures modestly higher from the prior year amid continuation of a robust capital improvement program. The current fiscal year started on July 1, 2011, with an undesignated General Fund reserve of approximately \$4.00 million and contingency reserves of \$1.67 million in total, representing 107% of budgeted General Fund operating expenses for the 2011-12 fiscal year. With 2011-12 budgeted operating revenues of \$6.43 million and expenditures of \$5.32 million, the year is forecasted to end with an operating surplus of \$1.11 million.

In 2011-12, the Town has budgeted capital spending of \$2.49 million, 70% of which will be in street and pathway improvements. This program adds to the \$8.82 million capital program of the past three years focused on streets, pathways, and park facilities. Funding for capital programs comes from a combination of outside funds and grants, as well as General Fund surplus and General Fund reserves.

The budget was prepared using conservative revenue growth projections. For example, property taxes, the Town's largest revenue source, were budgeted to increase 1.7% year-over-year. However, good news from the County Assessor's Office received after the budget's adoption estimate property taxes will increase 3.8%. This reflects a stronger real estate market partially offset by downward adjustment of property taxes for homes purchased at the height of the market. Additionally, the adopted budget assumed the elimination of public safety grant revenues in the amount of \$100,000; however, the approved State budget results in only a \$40,000 decrease in revenue to the Town.

On the expense side, new salary and benefit policies have contained personnel costs. For example, the budget anticipates modifying the pension benefit for employees hired after August 15, 2011 and capping contributions to the employer-provided medical plan. Overall, the Town's compensation package remains competitive with our peer agencies of Woodside, Atherton, Portola Valley, and Los Altos.

Nick Peguero, Finance Director

PREPARING FOR Emergencies

Without warning, disaster can strike the Bay Area leaving. From power outages to major earthquakes, there are ways you can prepare in the event of a disaster. Personal Emergency Preparedness (PEP) is a free workshop offered to residents of the Los Altos Hills County Fire District. In this course you learn about the many types of disasters that can hit the Bay Area and what you can do to be ready.

Topics include:

Disaster impact on infrastructure: The potential effect of disasters on transportation, electrical service, telephone communication, food, water, shelter, fuel, and emergency services.

Home and workplace preparedness: Create a disaster supplies kit and prepare in advance to manage a disaster.

Structural and nonstructural hazards: Identify and mitigate possible hazards; including utility shut-off.

Life-threatening conditions: Recognize and treat an airway obstruction, and learn how to control bleeding and treat for shock.

Fire safety: Develop a home escape plan, maintain smoke alarms, and operate a fire extinguisher.

Hazardous materials: Identification of household hazardous materials, proper storing and disposal, and hazardous materials decontamination.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) overview: Community Emergency Response Team training includes neighborhood preparedness, fire safety, hazardous materials, disaster medicine, light search & rescue, CERT organization, disaster psychology, and terrorism awareness.

To register or for more information, please contact Emergency Services Coordinator Mike Sanders at mike.sanders@cmt.sccgov.org or 650-922-1055.

PEP

Session 1: 10/1
Time: 9:00 am - 12:30 pm
Day: Saturday
Location: El Monte Fire Station

Session 2: 11/9
Time: 6:00 - 9:30 pm
Day: Wednesday
Location: El Monte Fire Station

Senior PEP
Session 1: 10/8
Session 2: 11/12
Day: Saturday
Time: 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Location: El Monte Fire Station

Los Altos Hills is a safe town to live in, but a recent wave of burglaries has raised concern among Town residents. Following a few simple guidelines will greatly reduce your risk of becoming a victim of theft.

"Most break-ins are crimes of opportunity," says Detective Ryan McGuire from the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office. Detective McGuire has investigated some of the recent burglaries in Los Altos Hills. In the first four months of the current year, 11 homes have been burglarized. The trend seems to be slightly upward—for all of 2010 there were 15 burglaries, with 14 in 2009.

The simplest steps to prevent burglaries can also be the most effective—lock doors, secure windows, and do not leave valuables in plain sight in vehicles. Most criminals look for easy targets, like open house doors or unlocked cars with purses or cell phones inside. As a result, these simple steps can go a long way toward preventing crimes of opportunity.

PREVENT CRIMES OF OPPORTUNITY

Another key to crime prevention is becoming knowledgeable about the people who work on your property, Detective McGuire advises. Some of the recent crimes have been linked to gardeners or landscapers, who have either worked with or hired the suspects on a temporary basis.

"Get as much information as you can about the people who work for you. Get their name, address, and license plate number," Detective McGuire counsels.

"The suspects we have apprehended have paid attention to the routines of the home and where the hide-a-keys are kept."

Other effective deterrents include dogs, alarm systems, motion sensor or code compliant outdoor lighting, and trimming shrubs around your house. Stop your mail during vacation and do not announce your holidays on Facebook.

"And if something around your neighborhood looks suspicious, do not hesitate to contact us by calling 9-1-1," Detective McGuire emphasizes.

In case these preventative steps fail, make note of your valuables. Record the serial numbers of cell phones, laptops, iPads, GPS units, and other electronics. Take photographs of your most prized jewelry. They can easily be tracked in case the burglar tries to sell them or is caught with them. In addition to getting your possessions back, these steps can help catch the thief and prevent further crimes.

BECOME A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

From education and history to finance and the environment, there are meaningful volunteer opportunities in the community for every taste and persuasion. A broad range of Town committees currently have openings, which are listed in the accompanying table. Find one that fits with your passion and get involved.

For example, the Environmental Design and Protection Committee of Los Altos Hills is currently seeking new members. One of the original volunteer committees set up by the Town, the Committee is charged "to work for the beautification of the Town, to identify sources of pollution, and to review and inspect plantings."

Committee members work closely with the Planning Department, visiting monthly the sites of all new work in the Town—new houses, remodels, and landscaping, and a Committee member is present at the subsequent Site Development meeting with the applicant.

The Environmental Design and Protection Committee is looking for people who want to be part of a group conserving the natural beauty of Los Altos Hills. Volunteers should be willing and able to give up to five hours a month to interesting and varied work that really does make a difference to the Town.

Contact Pat Ley at 650-941 1674 or ley.pat@gmail.com for more information.

Committees (max. # of members)	Vacancies
Community Relations (8-10)	2
Education (11)	2
Emergency Communications (10-25)*	10
Environmental Design (8)	4
Environmental Initiatives (11)	5
Finance & Investment (10)*	1
History (9)	4
Parks & Rec (3-10)	1
Pathways (2)	2

* indicates special requirements for membership.
Please check with City Clerk for more information.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SENIOR COMMITTEE

The City Councils of Los Altos Hills and Los Altos established a joint Senior Citizens Committee in May 2010. The Committee's purpose is to "make recommendations about programs and resources that pertain to seniors and to gather information [about wants and needs] from our senior community."

The newly formed Committee surveyed area seniors in January 2011. The overwhelming response indicated that seniors have much to say about their future in our community. Key findings and themes highlighted in the survey include:

- Improved overall transportation—seniors cited the need for more sidewalks and better lighting to encourage walking, safer bike lanes, and some kind of shuttle for those who do not drive
- "Aging in place"—a concept connected with the need for reliable home maintenance and caregiving
- Downsizing—shared housing and/or affordable senior-ready condos in the downtown Los Altos or Los Altos Hills

- New senior center—with reasonably priced fitness facilities, a pool, and activities for the "Baby Boomer" age bracket
- Meaningful volunteer opportunities

The Committee shared the preliminary findings with a group of interested citizens at an event held at the Neutra House on June 23. Los Altos Hills Mayor Ginger Summit, an enthusiastic supporter of the Los Altos/Los Altos Hills Senior Committee, explained to the attendees how results gained from the survey would encourage collaboration between the two cities and invited everybody present to take a trip to the "other" side of Foothill Expressway and explore the attractions in the Los Altos Hills area.

The Senior Committee will be presenting both City Councils with an in-depth report on the findings along with recommendations for addressing the needs (which will benefit the entire community, not just one segment). Interested parties can access www.ci.los-altos.ca.us/committees-commissions/senior/index.html to see preliminary survey results.

Passionate ABOUT Pathways

The pathway system in our Town is a unique asset for recreation, emergency access or evacuation, and neighborhood connections both physically and emotionally. Trails allow us to experience the rare beauty of Los Altos Hills. Occasionally, the pathway system is a focus of much passionate discussion. Many Town residents use and appreciate our pathway system, but not everyone understands why it is still “a work in progress,” or how changes are made.

The pathway system started even before the Town was incorporated. Many off-road paths were created by equestrians, who loved the rural feel of the hills at a time when the valley was becoming increasingly urbanized. When the Town incorporated, paths were already part of our community's very fabric.

As time went on, the Town adopted formal standards for pathways, requiring applicants for site development permits to install a path on their property unless there was an existing path across the street. The theory behind this requirement is that an integrated pathway system would be built over time. However, some locations cannot support a viable path. Those property owners were charged a pathway fee. Rules to clarify when a path easement would be requested or when a fee would be collected were added to the official Town documents. The formal Pathway Element and Master Path Plan (MPP) are part of the Town's General Plan.

The Master Path Plan includes a map that shows: (1) Pathway easements granted, and planned for pathway development in the future. (Note that these easements should NOT be blocked even if the path is not established). (2) Pathway easements granted, and pathways not currently planned for development. (Note this designation could change with modifications to the Master Path Plan.) (3) Existing paths on easements, both on and off road. (4) Indication of places where paths are desired, but easements are not yet in place.

To update the Master Path Plan requires formal public hearings, leading to a vote by the Town Council. The last update to the Master Path Plan and Pathway Element of the General Plan was in 2008. All decisions relating to the pathway system by the Pathway Committee, Planning Commission, and the Town Council are based on these documents. The Pathway Committee uses the Pathway Element and the MPP to provide consistent recommendations for pathway installation decisions.

A proposal for a new pathway can set off a storm of controversy, but as residents come to understand the Town's rules and guidelines,

most neighborhoods ultimately appreciate the value of the path. Residents with concerns about new paths often can put their minds at ease by discussing their reservations with neighbors who have nearby paths. Typically, pathway users follow common sense and courtesy, and experience tells us that people using the paths become a more closely knit (and therefore safer) community. What's more, many residents are surprised to find that pathways ADD value to a house. (Ask your realtor about a specific path, not just about an easement in general.)

As a result of the commitment of the Town and members of the community, the pathway system continues to grow in accordance with the goals and guidelines set forth in the Pathway Element and MPP. These policies ensure that this valuable community asset will be preserved and enhanced for future residents.

If you have a pathway issue or concern, please contact the current Pathway Committee Chairman (e.gibbons@gmail.com). The Pathway Committee is dedicated to helping Town residents enjoy, preserve, and complete their pathway system.

To help residents explore the Town's pathway system, there will be a Town walk at 5:30 pm on Sept. 23. Meet at Foothill College parking lot near the fire house.
(The walk will be about 1 hour and 2 miles without steep hills.)



High Energy Homes Project Points to ENERGY SAVINGS\$

Los Altos Hills residents have begun to achieve significant energy savings by utilizing the new High Energy Homes program offered by the Town and Acterra, a local non-profit with a grant from the California Energy Commission. This online and confidential service is offered free of charge to LAH residents at www.acterra.org.

The June newsletter article "Power Hungry?" noted that the typical Los Altos Hills home consumes three times the energy of the average Northern California residence. Since the program launch in May, several residents have used the online software program and are seeing up to a 23% drop in their home energy usage.

According to one resident, "My utility bill has gone down substantially. The program helped me discover that my twenty-plus-year old pool filter was undersized. As a result, I was running the filter more hours to compensate for its poor efficiency.

In addition to upgrading the pool filter, I also changed the pump to a variable-speed model. Lower RPMs and shorter run time for the pump have significantly reduced the pool's energy requirements."

This is just one example of the recommendations you'll receive from the program, showing you how to eliminate energy leaks in your home without crimping your lifestyle.

Acterra has lowered the threshold for participating in the program from having an average monthly PG&E bill of \$700 down to \$500, enabling more residents to participate. Additionally, you must have an installed SmartMeter, be willing to share PG&E bill data for the previous and following twelve months, and live in the home for at least one year. Unfortunately, solar PV users can't participate at this time since they don't have SmartMeters.

For more information go to www.acterra.org and click on the High Energy Homes icon or contact Davena Gentry at 650- 962-9876 x 305, email: davenag@acterra.org.



Oh Deer!



Town residents fond of gardening and landscape design will no doubt be familiar with the local deer population. While townsfolk who prefer lush landscapes likely view deer as pests, it's worth remembering that others in Town believe deer are wonderful animals to observe, and see them as emblematic of the highly valued open space characteristic of Los Altos Hills. What's for certain, though, is that these creatures are part of life in the Hills—sharing their home with those of us who have chosen to live here—and deserve some consideration.

One of the most important decisions residents can make with respect to the deer that call the hills home is in regard to fencing. Indeed, residents in some parts of Town report seeing more deer than ever on their property, while other sections of our community are experiencing fewer deer. This imbalance is likely a result of an increase in wildlife-impermeable fencing that unintentionally forces animals onto other properties where there is less fencing.

Deer-friendly space

The best solution for deer and the natural beauty of our community is to allow even a small part of your property to remain open in its natural state, or to use a non-barrier fence if you feel it necessary to fence around the entire property. The more natural space open to deer, the less conflict there is likely to be between humans and wildlife forced onto roadways or funneled onto other neighbors' yards. This approach will also help the Town retain part of its natural ecology.

Ideal deer fence

For those who want to keep deer out of some portion of their yard, the ideal solution is polypropylene deer fence, which comes in heights of 7' or more, is durable, almost invisible, and is easy to install. This type of fencing is much more desirable than wrought-iron fencing, in which deer can get caught, or fencing topped with spikes or

other implements that can present hazards to deer. To minimize these deer hazards, some residents put up deer fencing over vertical bars, particularly during fawn season. This sort of fencing solution is

unobtrusive, inexpensive, and easy to attach.

Deer and gates

Deer are intelligent animals with personality traits similar to dogs; however, their strong flight instinct makes them prone to panic if trapped. For this reason, it is vitally important to keep gates in fenced areas closed at all times. If a deer is found in a fenced area, never attempt to chase or herd it out. A panicked deer can die by bolting into a tree or fence post. Deer will leave on their own and should be allowed to do so. They will do relatively little damage during this time compared with the cost to remove a deer that has been literally scared to death. San Jose Tallow charges a

minimum of \$150 to remove a carcass; Palo Alto Animal Services will not pick up dead animals on private property.

Deer-resistant plants

Another important strategy property owners can use in dealing with the local deer population is to landscape with deer-resistant plants.

For more information on deer-resistant plants go to www.yerba-buena-nursery.com/DEER1a.php.



BCS TAKES TOP HONORS



BCS students got a first-hand look at how learning science can help them make a positive difference in their world. Indeed, when asked “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Jacqueline Hillman, a student at Bullis Charter School (BCS), responds “A science teacher, so I can teach my students to save our world.”

Jacqueline, along with last year’s BCS fourth graders, applied their learning when they placed second in the Siemens “We Can Change the World Challenge.” This national competition is sponsored by the Siemens Foundation, Discovery Education, the National Science Teachers Association, and the College Board. The goal of the Challenge is to empower young people to create solutions to today’s environmental problems. Nearly 18,000 elementary, middle, and high school students competed



Top: BCS students transporting the straw wattles that they constructed to help slow erosion on the banks of Adobe Creek. Bottom: Participants in the Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge: BCS students, 4th grade class teachers Daniel Gross and Nate Rinaker, and Science and Engineering Specialist Lynn Reed, a LAH resident.

this year, with projects addressing a wide variety of topics.

For this year’s Challenge project, BCS submitted data that students collected during the last school year for their ongoing erosion and abatement research in conjunction with Hidden Villa, local educational farm and wilderness preserve. Students and teachers have been working together with

staff in the Hidden Villa Environmental Education Program for the past seven years to develop an erosion control method and prevent loss of habitat along a section of Adobe Creek. Students collect data, research ecology, identify environmental hazards,

and develop plans for habitat restoration as part of a service project-based learning unit. They are also tasked with implementing their various plans ranging from erosion control blankets to gopher-prevention cages.

Since this project started in 2005, students have continued to improve their success rate in preventing erosion and restoring habitat as represented in this year’s project data. When reflecting on community impact from this project, participant Sophia Lufkin said that she hopes that others “gain courage and understanding that people can help the environment wherever they are.”

POWERING STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Is your bucket full of Warm Fuzzies? Are you an Upstander? Do you swim away from Hooks? If you don’t know what any of this means, ask a student at Gardner Bullis School. They can tell you that Warm Fuzzies are the warm feelings you get when you make someone happy, and Upstanders refuse to join in bullying behavior and say or do something when someone needs help. They can also tell you that “free fish” ignore the Hooks (teasing, name-calling, etc.) and swim away.

These valuable lessons are the results of the implementation of Project Cornerstone at Gardner Bullis School this past year. Project Cornerstone was founded by a collaboration of various youth and community organization and works to train and mobilize school staff, students, and parents to build developmental assets in order to support student success, both academically and in all areas of their lives.

Developmental assets are the positive relationships, experiences, values, and skills which provide young people with support,

empowerment, boundaries, expectations, and a positive identity. These assets are essential building blocks of healthy child and youth development.

As part of the Project Cornerstone program at Gardner Bullis, Asset Building Champions (ABC) adult volunteers spent time in the classrooms each month reading a book and leading discussions and activities. In addition, a group of students from grades 3-6 participated in Expect Respect workshops intended to create a more caring school climate where all students receive the support and encouragement they need to succeed through skits, fun Friday activities, and role modeling. Finally, a six-week workshop for parents called “Take it Personally” focused on implementing the values and developmental assets into their children’s lives.

With the implementation of Project Cornerstone, Gardner Bullis School and its teachers, staff, and families are doing their part to help create a world where children feel valued, and can thrive and grow up to become caring, responsible adults.



HOEDOWN

The annual Los Altos Hills Hoedown at Westwind Community Barn is set for 3:00 to 8:00 pm Saturday, September 10. This year's Hoedown will feature live bluegrass music, old-fashioned arts & crafts, farmers market, barbeque, and entertainment for the entire family. The community farmers market provides an opportunity for residents to set up a table to sell their own garden-grown fruits and vegetables. The event will also highlight textile demonstrations, quilting, knitting, crocheting, spinning, weaving, soap making, leather tooling, puppet making, and family-oriented games and prizes. At 4:30 pm, come view the equestrian exhibitions in the upper arena, featuring 4-H mini horses, riding demonstrations from participants in the Parks and Recreation Department's Year 'Round Riding Program, as well as the Pacific Ridge Pony Club. This year, California Barbecue will be selling BBQ meals and a la carte items. The 4-H, Youth Commission, and Pony Club will host a bake sale. Several wines will be on offer along with beer from Sudwerk. If you would like to participate in the farmers market, host a craft table or game, help teach knitting, crocheting or embroidery, pour wine, or donate to the event, please contact Sarah Gualtieri 650-947-2518 or sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov.

TOWN PICNIC HITS ATTENDANCE RECORDS

Over 2,000 Town residents enjoyed a bountiful Sunday picnic on June 5, 2011 at Purissima Park. The number was a record for this annual event, which has grown into the foremost community occasion in the Hills.

Youngsters bobbed apples, climbed the towering rock wall, and played a live form of Angry Birds. The Gunn High School Robotics team took the opportunity to show off their designs.

Guests of all ages gathered to watch a sight previously unseen on these fields: a pig race. A few lucky spectators got to show off funky moves in front of the audience, under the expert guidance of the Arkansas-based Hambone Express race directors.

This important community event is made possible by the work and planning of Hills residents on the Community Relations Committee, using funds provided by the Town. In addition, over 60 volunteers assisted with registration, serving drinks and ice cream, and very importantly, cleaning up after the merriment was concluded.





TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS
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Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

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Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose

This is the official Town newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the Town — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the Town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is October 1, 2011.**

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www.losaltoshills.ca.gov

Our Town

Our Town is published with assistance from Town Volunteer Committees.
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Community Services Coordinator: Sarah Gualtieri

Los Altos Hills City Council

Ginger Summit, Mayor
Rich Larsen, Mayor Pro Tem
Jean Mordo
John Radford
Gary Waldeck

CALENDAR

Sept 10

Sat, 3:00 – 8:00 pm
Los Altos Hills Hoedown
Westwind. Free admission; food and drink for purchase. See page 11.

22

Thur, 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Los Altos Neutra House Season-Opening Party
Kick off event at a fabulous Los Altos Hills home designed by the late Goodwin Steinberg. Cocktail reception and silent auction.

23

Friday, 5:30 pm
Pathway Walk
Meet at Foothill College parking lot near the fire



house. The 2-mile walk will take about one hour without steep hills.

25

Sunday, 2:00 – 5:00 pm
Artist Reception and Fundraiser
The Town and Silicon Valley Open Studios present "The Environment and Conservation" at Town Hall. Contact Karen Druker, 650-941-8073.

Oct 12

Wednesday, 7:00 pm
Underground Utility Assessment District Informational Forum
How to form an assessment district to underground utilities in your neighborhood. Open to all Town residents. Town Hall. Contact: Duffy Price, 650-948-0596; Duffy555@gmail.com

15

Sat, 10:00 am–3:00 pm
Fall Native Plant Sale
Hard-to-find native plants, seeds, and bulbs. Speak to experts about lawn alternatives. Cash or check. 10% of proceeds benefit Hidden Villa. Visit www.cnps-scv.org or contact CNPS_scv@yahoo.com 650-941-1068.



23

Sunday, 3:00 pm
Halloween Pumpkin Carving
Los Altos Hills Family (LAHF) and Fremont Hills Country Club invites your family for an afternoon of games, activities, and treats. Visit www.lahfamily.com.

29

Sat, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
19th Annual Halloween Horse Show
Pacific Ridge Pony Club hosts this event at Westwind Community Barn. Halloween costume contest for kids, adults, and horses complete with ribbons and prizes. Visit: www.pacificridgeponyclub.org.

Nov 27

Sunday, 6:00 – 7:00 pm
Los Altos Festival of Lights Parade
This popular event draws community members to Downtown Los Altos each holiday season. The Town



will be sponsoring the Mother Goose float and the Youth Commission will volunteer.

Dec 4

Sunday, 1:00 – 4:00 pm
Holiday Barn Lighting
Arts and crafts. Visit Santa in an antique horse carriage. Demonstrations by YRRP, 4-H, and Pony club, live music, and entertainment. To learn more contact Sarah Gualtieri 650-947-2518.

10

Saturday, 6:30 pm
Holiday Tree Lighting and Movie Night
LAHF presents a tree lighting and movie night at Town Hall. Families will gather to light the Heritage Oak. Families with young children will move to the Council Chambers for a movie; teens will build gingerbread houses. For more information visit www.lahfamily.com.

Calendar events are also posted on Town's website: www.losaltoshills.ca.gov